

Message Text

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63

ACTION NEA-16

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-11 L-03

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: EGEN EG

SUBJ: ARAB BOYCOTT OF ISRAEL

1. ALL CAIRO PAPERS CARRIED STORY ON SEPTEMBER 10 REPORTING COMMENTS OF BRIGADIER MUSTAFA HELIM, THE DIRECTOR OF THE CAIRO BOYCOTT OFFICE, ON THE EFFECTS OF THE OCTOBER WAR ON THE BOYCOTT. ACCORDING TO HELIM, THE SHIFT IN METHODS FROM A CONVENTIONAL BOYCOTT TO A POSITIVE BOYCOTT, BASED ON CONVINCING FOREIGN FIRMS THAT THEIR INTERESTS LIE IN COOPERATING WITH THE ARAB WORLD HAS BEEN VERY SUCCESSFUL. AS A RESULT, THERE HAS BEEN AN UNPRECENTED LEVEL OF RESPONSE TO BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES IN ARAB COUNTRIES.

2. HELIM CLAIMED THAT THE NUMBER OF BLACKLISTED FIRMS HAS DECLINED REMARKABLY IN THE LAST SIX MONTHS. SOME EIGHTY FIRMS HAVE BEEN TAKEN OFF THE LIST, WHILE 42 OTHERS HAVE BEEN ALLOWED TO REOPEN THEIR ACTIVITIES AFTER HAVING SEVERED THEIR RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS, HELIM ADDED THAT THE FUTURE BOYCOTT POLICY WOULD BE TO CONCENTRATE ON DEVELOPING COUNTRIES IN ASIA,

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AFRICA AND LATIN AMERICAN, CONVINCING THEM OF THE VALUE OF

COOPERATION WITH THE ARABS WHILE AT THE SAME TIME PROTECTING THEMSELVES FROM THE DANGERS OF ZIONIST EXPLOITATION. IN CLOSING, HELIM URGED ARAB TOURIST NOT TO PATRONIZE SHOPS IN EUROPE WHICH ARE BLACKLISTED FOR ZIONIST LEANINGS.

3. COMMENT: THE EGYPTIAN PRESS NORMALLY PAYS LITTLE ATTENTION TO THE BOYCOTT QUESTION. WHILE NOTHING CONCRETE HAS YET EMERGED, THE GOE ITSELF HAS MADE NOISES WHICH WOULD INDICATE A DESIRE TO GET ON WITH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT UNHAMPERED BY QUESTIONS AS TO WHO DOES AND WHO DOES NOT DEAL WITH ISRAEL. THE REALITIES OF THE PRESENT SITUATION HAVE PREVENTED MUCH POSITIVE ACTION IN THIS DIRECTION, BUT THE RUMORS OF A SHIFT IN BOYCOTT POLICY TO PERMIT COMPANIES TO OPERATE IN BOTH ARAB COUNTRIES AND ISRAEL AT THE SAME TIME WOULD PROBABLY REFLECT A STEP FORWARD IN THE EYES OF EGYPT.

EILTS

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